olume 14 no. 3 november, 1961

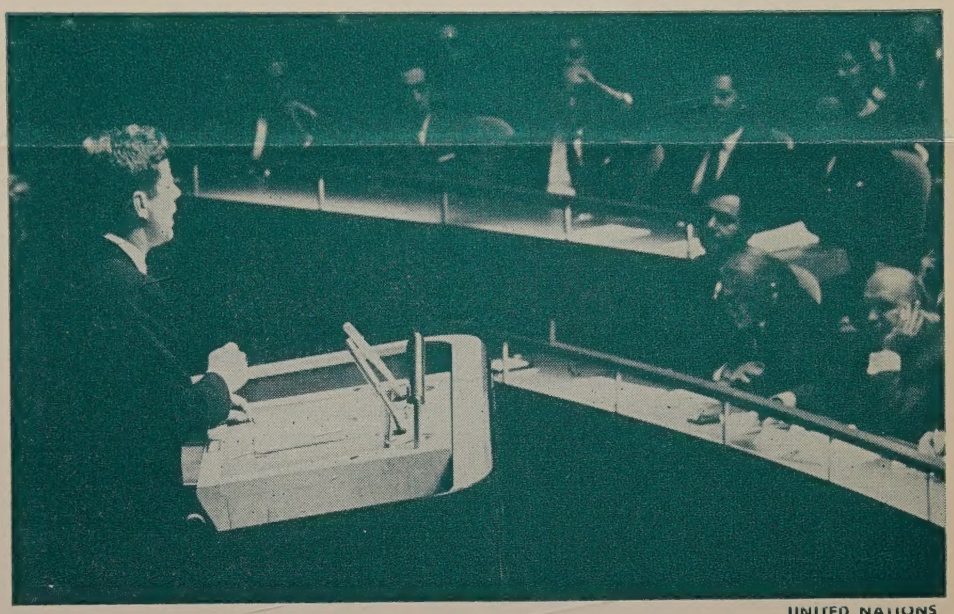
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY—1961

By Herman F. Reissig

"The Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ is tremendously encouraged by your speech to the General Assembly." So begins a long telegram sent to President Kennedy three days after his speech was delivered to the United Nations. The CCSA was not alone in its estimate. Following a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Churches' Department of International Affairs, the Department officers wired the President: "Your challenging, carefully balanced address to the United Nations Assembly gave important leads for broad, non-partisan backing by informed citizens and groups . . ." Said Dr. Clark Eichelberger, Director of the American Association for the United Nations. "Now we must rally public opinion in support of the President."

In church agencies and citizens organizations specializing in international affairs, and also in newsletter editorial offices, the response to what the President said was overwhelmingly affirmative. What is the reason for this response? For one thing, while omitting discussion of some aspects of foreign policy such as the question of China, the President had presented the clearest statement of United States positions and objectives that we have had in a long time. This is important. It was not "just another speech." After months of searching discussion in Washington and around the country, not to forget innumerable conferences with allied nations, the Administration—which is, under the Constitution, responsible for the formulation and conduct of U. S. foreign policy—was ready to state its position and its objectives in at least five of the most important areas of international affairs. And the fact that the President was speaking before the representatives of ninety-nine nations gave the speech especially great importance.



UNITED NATIONS

President John F. Kennedy addresses the United Nations General Assembly, September 25, 1961 in a major delineation of United States proposals for strengthening international peace, cooperation, and justice.

In our churches, as elsewhere, one often is asked—usually with some impatience—"What *is* the foreign policy of the United States?" The right answer has always been, "The foreign policy of the United States is what the President says it is, and if you wish to know what it is read carefully the speeches of the President and of his chief advisor in this area, the Secretary of State." But it is, of course, true that the President and the Secretary have not always told us clearly what they, as the formulators and executors of the nation's foreign policy, have agreed upon. Not that such lack of clarity is always blameworthy! In our contemporary world almost every aspect of international action is terribly complicated. Situations change from day to day. Allies must be consulted. American public opinion must be taken into account. The effect of our policies on the uncommitted nations must be considered. To expect from government on any given day precise formulation of United States foreign policy is to expect too much.

The President's speech to the United Nations General Assembly was deeply satisfying to many of us because it left no doubt in our minds about the position of the Administration on major issues and because, to an unusual degree, it combined realism with moral idealism, firmness with willingness to negotiate what-

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The General Synod of the United Church of Christ gave overwhelming approval to a statement on *National Responsibility and International Relations.* Because many of its objectives with reference to the United Nations, World Economic and Social Development, Disarmament, and International Tension are supported in President Kennedy's address to the United Nations General Assembly, we present this summary and commentary on the President's address by CCSA's International Relations Secretary, the Reverend Herman F. Reissig.

Dr. James H. Sheldon, chairman of the Social Action Committee of the New York conference, who represented CCSA at Senate hearings on the subject, reports on how the foreign aid bill fared.

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ever is negotiable. Furthermore, to quote a *Fact Sheet* distributed by the National Council's Department of International Affairs, "Constructive initiatives in this address are parallel with major official positions of the National Council of Churches." It should go almost without saying that the CCSA would not have wired its commendation if it had not been sure that at many points the President enunciated policies long advocated by representative bodies in the United Church of Christ, as well as by the CCSA. Let us look at the principal things said by the President.

On Increasing United Nations Powers and Responsibilities

"It (the United Nations) will either grow to meet the challenge of our age—or it will be gone with the wind, without influence, without force, without respect." It is, incidentally, not without significance that the present Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs is Mr. Harlan Cleveland, well known for his long-time advocacy of a stronger United Nations. "In the development of this organization rests the only true alternative to war." This is a strong statement. Some UN supporters may think it too strong. The President could hardly mean that, in the immediate situation, the possibility of peace depends wholly on the United Nations. Regional alliances and bi-lateral negotiations have an important function. The UN cannot, and should not, try to take on every international problem. But the President evidently has come to the conclusion, as have so many of us, that the dismantling of national armaments and world peace are ultimately not possible without a strong international organization with machinery for settling disputes and enforcing peace. And this point is specially made: "To destroy arms is not enough. We must create even as we destroy — creating worldwide law and law enforcement as we outlaw worldwide war and weapons. . . . ."

NOTE: For a discussion of the United States position on the "troika" proposal, see the October 19, 1961, issue of the UNITED CHURCH HERALD.

Steps Toward Increasing UN Powers

1. All member nations should "earmark special peace-keeping units in their armed forces to be on call to the United Nations — to be specially trained and quickly available—and with advance provision for financial and logistic support." There is Charter provision for this but it has never been put into effect. UN forces for Korea, the Middle East, and the Congo have had to be hastily assembled, with no special training, and the cost of the latter two operations has bankrupted the organization.

2. We must "take steps to improve the United Nations' machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes—for on-the-spot fact-finding, mediation and adjudication—for extending the rule of international law." These steps are so elementally important that there is little use of talking about disarmament and peace unless we take them.

3. We should extend "the United Nations Charter to the limits of man's exploration of the universe." With every instrument or man shot into outer space, the necessity of UN supervision becomes more pressing. Else we add new causes of dangerous dispute between the nations.

4. We should designate "this decade of the 1960's as the United Nations Decade of Development." We should expand and coordinate "the United Nations existing efforts in promoting economic growth." For this, specifically, the churches, as well as other bodies, have long pleaded.

5. The new United States disarmament program "would place the final responsibility for verification and control where it belongs . . . in an international organization within the framework of the United Nations itself." As far as this writer is aware, this is the first time the United States has officially advocated UN supervision of steps in arms reduction. It seems an excellent proposal.

Warning to the Optimistic

When the President, speaking of the new tasks to be given to the UN, says: "This will require new strength and new roles for a new United Nations," we should not be under any illusions about unanimous support by the American public. Even the present relatively weak UN is too much for many of our people! They do not know that national values can no longer be protected by the old nationalistic approach. Church leaders should not stop with simply asking for "a stronger United Nations." They should carefully explain *why*, in the very name of national interest, as well as for the sake of worldwide well-being, we must now give new roles and new powers to the international organization. If the Administration means to back up the President's proposals, there devolves upon the churches a great new responsibility for education and action.

The Question of China

The President, as noted above, did not discuss the question of China's representation in the UN. With no adequate space to discuss it here, two observations may be useful. First, Nationalist China cannot speak for the present Chinese nation and, for all the belligerent hostility of the government of mainland China, the place and power of that nation must be taken into account in any effort to achieve disarmament and build a peaceful world order. Second, if we believe in trying to achieve a tolerable world order through discussion, negotiation and the use of international machinery for peaceful change, instead of through armed conflict, it seems desirable to bring into our counsels all governments in effective control of nations, be they "good" or "bad," democratic, fascist, or communist. The degree of our "anti-communism" is in no sense to be measured by our attitude toward Chinese representation in the United Nations.

On Disarmament

Discussions on armaments in government circles and on high professional levels have usually emphasized "arms reduction and control" rather than "disarmament." This was a wise and necessary distinction because actual disarmament of the nations was, and remains, an illusory hope unless international legal machinery and international military forces are created to settle disputes and enforce peace. The Soviets have talked much about the grand goal of disarmament, without giving serious attention to effective methods of settling international disputes. Hence the quite justified lack of enthusiasm for their plan in Western nations.

The Administration now accepts the goal of "general and complete disarmament," to be reached by agreed upon stages, with international inspection and control, *and coupled with* simultaneous provision of international machinery for the settlement of disputes.

"Men no longer debate whether armaments are a symptom or cause of tension. The mere existence of modern weapons . . . is a source of horror, discord and distrust. Men no longer maintain that disarmament must await the settlement of all disputes—for disarmament must be a part of any permanent settlement. And men no longer pretend that the quest for disarmament is a sign of weakness — for in a spiralling arms race a nation's security may well be shrinking even as its arms increase . . . The risks of disarmament pale in comparison to the risks in an unlimited arms race." Here the President is speaking to those Americans, including some members of Congress, who, for the present at least, wish to talk only about more powerful armaments and who opposed the creation of the now functioning federal disarmament agency.

"It is our intention to challenge the Soviet Union, not to an arms race, but

co a peace race—to advance with us step by step, stage by stage, until general and complete disarmament has actually been achieved."

"The program to be presented to this assembly—for general and complete disarmament under effective international control—moves to bridge the gap between those who insist on a gradual approach and those who talk only of the final and total achievement . . . It would place final responsibility for verification and control where it belongs—not with the big powers alone, not with one's adversary or with one's self—but in an international organization within the framework of the United Nations itself . . . It would achieve, under the eye of an international organization, a steady reduction in forces, both nuclear and conventional, until it has abolished all armies and all weapons except those needed for internal order and a new United Nations peace force."

NOTE: The actual United States program presented to the United Nations may be studied in the booklet, "Freedom from War; The United States Program for General and Complete Disarmament in a Peaceful World." Order from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., price 15 cents.

On Berlin

"We are committed to no rigid formula. We see no perfect solution. We recognize that troops and tanks can, for a time, keep a nation divided against its will, however unwise that policy may be." (The immediately preceding sentence seems to carry a hint that the unification of Germany is recognized as, for the present, not feasible.) "But we believe a peaceful agreement is possible which protects the freedom of West Berlin and allied presence and access, while recognizing the historic and legitimate interests of others in assuring European security."

". . . We shall never negotiate out of fear but we shall never fear to negotiate."

". . . Every nation should know, be he friend or foe, that the United States has both the will and the weapons to join free men in standing up to their responsibilities. But we are here to look across this world of threats to a world of peace."

These statements on the Berlin crisis must be put down as a remarkable combination of firmness without rigidity. We will not, says the President, be blackmailed into surrender of vital interests but we recognize that our opponents may also have legitimate interests and fears and we are willing to consider adjustments of the present situation. To be sure, it is one thing to state the general approach of the United States and something much more difficult to make specific agreements that will not be to the disadvantage of either side. But it is no inconsiderable achievement to describe even in general terms the approach of the United States to this crisis without seeming to be either too rigid for the cause of peace or too "reasonable" for the cause of justice and freedom.

On Colonialism

"Within the limits of our responsibility in such matters, my country intends to be a participant, not merely an observer, in the peaceful, expeditious movement of nations from the status of colonies to the partnership of equals. That continuing tide of self-determination has our sympathy and support."

". . . The tide of self-determination has not reached the Communist empire where a population far larger than that officially termed 'dependent' lives under governments installed by foreign troops instead of free institutions . . ."

"Let us debate colonialism in full and supply the principle of free choice and the practice of free plebiscites in every part of the globe."

The first statement quoted is a heartening assertion of United States intention to help—and not merely observe—the colonial people achieve freedom. The uncommitted nations are said not to have relished the President's linking of traditional colonialism with the Russian sattelite system. This, in view of their experience, may be understandable, but it is nevertheless right to insist that freedom for Algeria and Angola should also mean freedom for Poland and Hungary.

NEW FOREIGN AID LAW

By James H. Sheldon

As Congress adjourned, President Kennedy had made substantial progress toward launching the "Decade of Development" for which he called in his Message of March 22, 1961.

Congress failed to grant the much-needed authority for Treasury financing over a 5-year period. On the other hand, this Session did enact "at least 90%" of the President's program, "including authorization for 5-year planning, without fiscal limitations, authority to make long-term commitments, and power to carry over unexpended funds from one year to another"—to sum up the record in the words of the Speaker Pro Tempore, Rep. John W. McCormack (Mass.).

The total appropriation of $3,914,600,000 was a good deal less than the President's initial request, and less than the amount carried in the authorizing act which established the new Agency for International Development — but the final compromise was a quarter of a billion dollars more than the badly-cut appropriation originally voted by the House. This amount is a little smaller than last year's figure, but separate appropriations for the Inter-American Development Bank and other agencies represent a material improvement in the over-all picture.

Most of the battle must be fought over again in 1962, because although the basic principle of long-term planning has at last been written into law, the money has been appropriated on only a one-year basis.

Two important matters of principle have been established: (1) We have adopted a definite emphasis on projects that support political and social reform, in contrast to the development of military strength alone; and (2) The administration will be unified, and its operations will be brought into much closer relationship with the people who are to benefit. Future projects will be more "human" in their impact, and will depend less on the "trickle down" theory of economy.

In announcing the appointment of Mr. Fowler Hamilton as Administrator of the A. I. D., the President heartily endorsed Hamilton's declaration that we should give first preference to those countries which also help themselves — thus recognizing the importance of programs directed toward basic social and economic improvements.

The Peace Corps has been approved, in a separate Congressional enactment, and now becomes a functioning reality, with its own budget. Visiting heads of state from Africa, Asia and South America have been uniformly vigorous in their praise of the Peace Corps, which will bring a large number of young Americans into direct contact with their opposite numbers in other countries.

All in all, the outlook in the foreign aid field is good—but an important contest remains for next year. It is not too early to start preparing for it now. In future, we must seek opportunities to present CCSA points of view to Congressmen on the grass roots level, if the counsel of the Church is to be made meaningful.

PRESCRIPTION FOR FRUSTRATED CHRISTIANS

Are You Frustrated?

℞ Many Christians are frustrated at the point of knowing just what to do about the whole problem of race in church and society. Our staff members, in the course of their field work, frequently hear these comments from individuals and groups: "What can I do? After we have heard the facts about racial discrimination and have explored the Biblical teaching on race, what can the local congregation or individual do?"

Of course, there are usually local injustices to combat and opportunities to write to one's Congressman. But what can one do about the big national problem of challenging segregation and extending the area of fair play? Here many a church member feels frustrated and alone.

What One Conference Did

One conference of the United Church helped its congregations and many members within them find a creative way to relieve their perplexity at this point. In 1960 the social action committee of the Massachusetts Congregational Christian Conference became convinced that church people should be more deeply involved in the struggle for equality of opportunity. It realized that the financial burden of processing cases through the courts is a heavy one and that a substantial share of the cost of litigation leading up to, and growing out of, the Supreme Court decision of 1954 had been carried by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Accordingly, the committee concluded that one of the most useful contributions it could make to the cause of racial justice was to rally the church people of the state to the support of the NAACP. It set a goal of $1,500 in membership fees and gifts. As a result of a statewide appeal, more than 200 members were added to the rolls of the Association and the financial goal was oversubscribed. Perhaps even more important was the moral and psychological "shot in the arm" thus realized.

What the Staff Proposes

The staff of the Council for Christian Social Action, too, has had accumulating evidence of discrimination, violence, and indignities visited upon members of minority groups. Since the expense of litigation falls most heavily on those who, because of discrimination, are least able to bear it, the staff has contributed a substantial sum to the Legal Aid and Defense Fund of the NAACP to help defray the cost of its struggle to establish equal opportunity through the courts. In addition, each staff member is personally inviting ten friends to contribute to the same cause. In this way it is hoped that the Fund will be strengthened to the extent of $10,000.

What You Can Do

You, too, can act to dispel that frustrated feeling:

- Make your gift to the NAACP Legal Aid and Defense Fund, 10 Columbus Circle, New York 19, N. Y., or send it *properly designated* through the Council for Christian Social Action.
- Invite your friends to do the same.
- Ask your local church to make a direct gift to the Fund or to sponsor a campaign for gifts and/or NAACP memberships.
- Plan with your conference, synod, or association social action committee to encourage contributions to the Legal Aid and Defense Fund.

The significance of these kinds of action lies in the fact that a more direct relationship is established between our profession of faith in a just God and the concrete struggles through which justice is advanced in our society. The latter is no longer outside our concern or beyond the reach of our effective influence.

Not least important, such positive action can be undertaken by any group or individual at any time. For while there are numerous organizations working valiantly at many phases of discrimination, the NAACP has been working at this problem for a long time. It has a reputation for responsible, principled behavior. And it will "be around" when new needs emerge.

After all, why should not church people be as deeply involved in the struggle for equality at home, as they are involved in overseas missions? We cannot all go to the mission field, but by our giving we make it possible for others to go. In the same way we, who are not personally involved in the cases that go through the courts, can by our giving make it possible for the NAACP and other groups to fight the court battles on behalf of us all.

COMMENDED BY GENERAL SYNOD

We commend those organizations which are in the forefront of the struggle for first-class citizenship for Negro Americans. In the efforts to establish through the Courts the constitutional rights of all Americans, we particularly affirm our support of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

—Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ, 1961.

SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

November 3—World Community Day

January 21 - 28 — Church and Economic Life Week.

January 28 - 31 — Council for Christian Social Action, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.

February—MONTH OF EMPHASIS FOR CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION.

February 6 - 8 — Seminar on Christian Farmer and His Government, Washington, D. C.

February 11—Race Relations Sunday.

February 27 - March 2, 1962—Churchmen's Washington Seminar, Washington, D. C.

April 24 - 26 — United Church of Christ Washington Seminar, Washington, D. C.

NEXT MONTH

Next month CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY will bring you a round-up on legislative business accomplished and left unfinished by the First Session of the Eighty-seventh Congress, to be prepared by CCSA's Washington Secretary, Dr. Lewis I. Maddocks. Groups desiring to place *extra* quantity orders for this issue —over and above their usual supply— should send requests, accompanied by check or money order, to the Cleveland office of the Council for Christian Social Action by November 5. Single copies, 10 cents; 10 or more, 5 cents each.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

NOVEMBER, 1961

News and Program Service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ
Ray Gibbons, Director
Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director and Editor

Sent free to pastors and social action committee chairmen. Group subscriptions, 10 or more to one address, 50 cents each. Individual subscriptions, $2 per year with SOCIAL ACTION upon request.

General communications and orders from Evangelical and Reformed churches should be addressed to the Editor, Council for Christian Social Action, 2969 W. 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Congregational Christians should order from Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N.Y.

The Council for Christian Social Action unites the work of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.